

REMARKS

At the outset, the Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated January 10, 2007 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 6 are hereby amended and claims 7 and 8 are newly added. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 1-8 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, alleging that the claims are not enabled by the disclosure. The Applicants have amended claims 1 and 4, as shown above. Applicants believe claims 1-6 now more clearly set forth the present invention enabled by the disclosure. Accordingly, the Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejection.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,489,455 to *Spendel*. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As required in Chapter 2131 of the M.P.E.P., in order to anticipate a claim under 35 U.S.C. §102, “the reference must teach every element of the claim.” The Applicants respectfully submit that *Spendel* does not teach every element recited in claims 1-6 and therefore cannot anticipate these claims. More specifically, claims 1 and 4 have been amended to recite a method of controlling a combination washer dryer, the method which includes “performing a second drying step after completion of the dewatering step, wherein the warm air re-circulates through the conduit where the warm air passes from the drum into the conduit and is returned to the drum and a supply valve provides water to the conduit during the second drying step.” *Spendel* fails to disclose at least this feature.

Spendel teaches an apparatus for laundering textiles that performs a laundering cycle. After the laundering cycle is complete, the device of *Spendel* is capable of performing a drying cycle. *See column 8, lines 58-60.* However, during the drying cycle, the diverter valve 168 is

positioned such that “fresh air is drawn into duct 171 and routed through the heater...the moist air [is] withdrawn [and] is discharged to the atmosphere.” *See column 9, lines 2-5.* Since fresh air is drawn into the duct and the air from the drum is discharged to the atmosphere, *Spendel* cannot possibly disclose “performing a second drying step after completion of the dewatering step, wherein the warm air re-circulates through the conduit where the warm air passes from the drum into the conduit and is returned to the drum and a supply valve provides water to the conduit during the second drying step,” as claimed in claims 1 and 4.

For at least the aforementioned reason, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 4 are patentably distinguishable over *Spendel*, and request that the rejection be withdrawn. Likewise, claims 2, 3, 5 and 6, which variously depend from claims 1 and 4 are also patentable for at least the same reason.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0015082 to *Minayoshi et al.* (hereinafter “*Minayoshi*”). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Applicants respectfully submit that *Minayoshi* does not teach every element recited in claims 1-6 and therefore cannot anticipate these claims. More specifically, claims 1 and 4 have been amended to recite a method of controlling a combination washer dryer, the method which includes simultaneously performing a dewatering step and a first drying step after completion of the washing and rinsing steps, wherein the first drying step includes re-circulating warm air through a conduit, and wherein the warm air passes from the drum into the conduit and is return to the drum and “performing a second drying step after completion of the dewatering step, wherein the warm air re-circulates through the conduit where the warm air passes from the drum into the conduit and is returned to the drum and a supply valve provides water to the conduit during the second drying step.” *Minayoshi* fails to disclose at least these features.

Minayoshi does not teach “re-circulating warm air through a conduit, wherein the warm air passes from the drum into the conduit and is returned to the drum” during a simultaneous dewatering step and a first drying step. In addition, *Minayoshi* does not disclose “performing a second drying step after completion of the dewatering step... a supply valve

provides water to the conduit during the second drying step.” In fact, *Minayoshi* teaches “external air introduced by the cooling blower 27 disposed on a side wall of the enclosure 1 cools the outer tub 3 and an outer wall of the heat exchanger 12. The moist warm air is thus cooled while it passes by an inner wall of the outer tub 3 and through an inside of the heat exchanger 12.” *See page 3, paragraph [0051], lines 1-4.* Therefore, *Minayoshi* does not anticipate the invention as required by the claims.

For at least the aforementioned reason, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 4 are patentably distinguishable over *Minayoshi*, and request that the rejection be withdrawn. Likewise, claims 2, 3, 5 and 6, which variously depend from claims 1 and 4 are also patentable for at least the same reason.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the state of the prior art admitted by the applicants in the specification (hereinafter “AAPA”). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Applicant respectfully submits that AAPA does not disclose every element recited in claims 1-6 and therefore cannot anticipate these claims. More specifically, the AAPA does not disclose simultaneously performing a dewatering step and a first drying step. The AAPA recites that “drying begins upon completion of the dewatering step of the wash cycle.” *See page 3, paragraph [0006], line 1.* Accordingly, AAPA does not disclose “simultaneously” performing a dewatering operation and a first drying operation, as claimed in claims 1 and 4.

For at least the aforementioned reason, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 4 are patentably distinguishable over AAPA, and request that the rejection be withdrawn. Likewise, claims 2, 3, 5 and 6, which variously depend from claims 1 and 4 are also patentable for at least the same reason.

The application is in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-

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7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: May 9, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By


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Attachments